



State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Testimony of

Senator Mac Flexer
Representative Susan Johnson
Representative Linda Orange

In Support Of S.B. 487, An Act Concerning Transportation Of Adult Students In Transitional Programs

Committee on Transportation
February 9, 2015

Good morning Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee. We offer this testimony in support of S.B. 487, An Act Concerning Transportation Of Adult Students In Transitional Programs.

First we would like to thank Chris McNaboe and James Oliver of Horizons in South Windham for bringing this issue to our attention. Horizons works to create opportunities for people with special needs, and is a vital resource for our community.

This bill addresses a mandate required by the state Department of Education that student transportation vehicles must display large yellow signs stating "CARRYING SCHOOL CHILDREN" as well as large placards on the sides and rear of the vehicle stating the support agency name and phone number and vehicle fleet number.

We have concerns regarding these displays with respect to special and secondary transition education providers. The students who participate in these programs are 18-years and older—legal adults—and they do so voluntarily. Organizations like Horizons are working to match these students and their abilities with local employers, building on their skills and positioning them for future success.

Being a student with special needs already carries with it many stigmas in our society. We share the concerns of Horizons that the yellow displays on students transportation vehicles announce that transition students are "children" and are different, undermining the notion that these students are self-motivated and capable potential employees.

With this legislation, we would like to see these signs and displays modified for adult learners, in order to further the mission of organizations like Horizons that are working to help these students become essential members of Connecticut's workforce.

Thank you very much for your consideration, and we urge you to support for this legislation.